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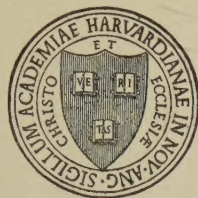
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Lilacs. Judging by the number of persons who visit the Arboretum when the Lilacs are in bloom, these are still more popular than any other group of shrubs here. The Lilac for the general public means the varieties of *Syringa vulgaris* which reached England from Constantinople in 1597. When it was first brought to the United States is unfortunately not known, and the earliest mention of it in American literature is the fact that it was sent by the Quaker Peter Collinson to John Bartram in Philadelphia in 1735. Washington, who probably obtained his plants from Bartram, planted it at Mount Vernon as early as 1785 and the descendants from these plants are still growing there, although Virginia is too far south for this shrub to really succeed there. There are plants on Bussey Hill in the Arboretum planted along one of the garden walks probably more than one hundred years ago. These plants flower well and are interesting as they represent the Lilac of old gardens as our ancestors enjoyed them before they were changed and sometimes improved by selection and hybridization by skilful gardeners in Europe and the United States. Until a few years ago it was believed that *Syringa vulgaris* was a native of western Asia but it has now been discovered growing apparently as a wild plant on the high mountains of Bulgaria. Plants raised from seeds collected in Bulgaria from these wild plants are growing in the Arboretum collection. The common Lilac is a cold country plant, and judging by the growth here the climate of Massachusetts even is not cold enough for them. Better plants can be seen in old gardens near Portsmouth, New Hampshire, than can be found near Boston, and the largest plants known to the Arboretum were growing a few years ago on

an island in Lake Superior where there were tree-like specimens thirty to forty feet high and nearly as much through their round-topped heads. Of the important varieties there are now two hundred named sorts in the Arboretum, a few of which have not flowered here yet. There are probably a larger number of these named varieties in the municipal parks of Rochester, New York, where a great deal of attention has been paid to the Lilac Collection. Many of these named varieties can hardly be distinguished from each other as they resemble each other too closely, and a selection of twenty or twenty-five varieties is all that is needed in any private collection to include everything that is best among these plants, both those with single and double, purple, red and white flowers. The Arboretum used to publish a list of the varieties which were considered here the most beautiful, but this plan is now given up for the selection of these plants depends on individual taste. They are all hardy, all have practically the same habit and foliage, and only differ in their flowers. In planting Lilacs it must be remembered that plants on their own roots are superior to those which have been grafted on other varieties of the common Lilac, for Lilacs produce many root-suckers. These often grow vigorously, so that a person who buys a fine named variety may in a few years find that the suckers from the root on which it was grafted have overpowered and killed his named variety, or that he has a bush producing on different branches flowers of his original purchase and of the stock. Nurserymen also use the Privet as a stock on which to graft Lilacs. This is a good stock for the Lilac for if it produces suckers they are easily recognized and can be removed, and if the grafted plants are set deep Lilac roots are soon produced. Privet stock is strongly recommended by many good growers of Lilacs but others still believe that the best plants are raised from cuttings which can be made from hard wood but better from the soft wood taken in late June or early July. No one should ever buy a Lilac plant grafted on the root of another Lilac.

Syringa persica. This is a beautiful hardy plant with slender, drooping, wide-spreading branches, narrower leaves than those of the common Lilac, and small fragrant, lavender-colored flowers in short compact clusters. There is a variety with white flowers and another with laciniately lobed leaves. For many years it was universally believed that because Linnæus had named it *Syringa persica* this plant was a native of Persia or of some country adjacent to Persia. Meyer, collecting in China for the Department of Agriculture of the United States, found in 1915 quantities of a Lilac covering hillsides in Kansu. Plants raised from seeds of this Lilac have flowered and proved identical with the lobed-leaf form of *Syringa persica* and as the plants have grown stronger they produce branches with the entire leaves of the type of the species. Since 1915 the Arboretum has also received dried specimens of this Lilac collected in Kansu. As a specimen of a wild plant from Persia is not to be found in the large European herbaria, there is every reason to believe that the Persian Lilac is a Chinese plant, brought from China to western Asia and Europe just as the Peach and other Chinese plants found their way westward. *Syringa Josikaea*, the second of the European Lilacs to reach American gardens is this Hun-

garian species which often does not bloom here until after the middle of June.

Syringa oblata was the first Lilac from eastern China to reach England where it was sent some sixty years ago by Robert Fortune who had found it in a Shanghai garden. It reached the United State certainly as early as 1869 and perhaps earlier. It is a round-topped shrub with heart-shaped leaves which, unlike those of other Lilacs, are thick and coriaceous and in the autumn turn scarlet. It is one of the first Lilacs to bloom in the spring here. This plant has not been found growing wild and there is no record that it has been seen by anyone in China since Fortune's time. It is probably a garden form of *S. affinis*, a white-flowered form commonly planted and probably the only Lilac in the gardens of Peking. Another form probably of *S. oblata* is the purple-flowered plant from northern China usually called the variety *Giraldii* of *S. affinis*. The Korean *S. dilatata* is probably also only a wild form of *S. oblata*. The two best known of the Lilacs of eastern Asia, *S. pubescens* and *S. villosa*, were raised here from seeds sent in 1883 by Dr. Bretschneider of the Russian Legation in Peking. *S. pubescens* is a tall shrub with erect stems, small leaves and broad clusters of small pale mauve flowers with a long slender corolla tube. For the fragrance of the flowers, which is more pungent and delightful than that of any other Lilac, *S. pubescens* should find a place in every northern garden. The plants in the United States have failed to produce seeds, and as this species is unusually difficult to increase by cuttings it has remained one of the rarest Lilacs in American gardens. *S. villosa* is a large, round-topped bush, from ten to twelve feet tall and wide, with large, broad, elliptic to oblong leaves bright green and dull on the upper surface and pale below, and broad or narrow clusters of flesh-colored or nearly white flowers which have a rather disagreeable odor like those of the Privet. In spite of this drawback *S. villosa* is a valuable plant; its habit is excellent, it flowers freely every year, and the flowers do not open until most of those of the other Lilacs have faded. Of the new Lilacs from western China and Korea raised from seeds collected by Wilson and other travelers the most promising are *S. Meyeri*, *S. microphylla*, *S. Julianae*, *S. tomentella*, *S. reflexa*, *S. Komarovii*, *S. Sweginzowii* and *S. dilatata*.

Hybrid Lilacs. The first hybrid Lilac appeared in the Botanic Garden in Rouen in 1810 and was the result of crossing *S. vulgaris* and *S. persica*. It is one of the most delightful of all Lilacs and grows into a bush ten or twelve feet high and broad and of rather open habit. It is very hardy and blooms freely every year, and should be in every garden where Lilacs are grown. Its flowers resemble those of the Persian Lilac and are produced in massive clusters sometimes two feet in length, and are so heavy that the slender branches can hardly support them. There are forms with darker red flowers and with nearly white flowers. Through a misunderstanding of its origin this plant unfortunately must be called *S. chinensis*.

The next hybrid Lilac to appear was *S. hyacinthiflora* which is the result of crossing *S. oblata* with *S. vulgaris coerulea plena*. It is a large, round-topped shrub of excellent habit, with leaves resembling in shape those of *S. oblata*, and small clusters of semi-double, extremely

fragrant flowers. It blooms earlier than any of the forms of *S. vulgaris* but has little to recommend it as a garden plant.

The general name of *Syringa Henryi* has been given to a group of hybrid Lilacs between *S. Josikaea* and *S. villosa* which was obtained in Paris. The handsomest of this breed, *S. Lutèce*, is a valuable addition to the late-flowing Lilacs. Another interesting hybrid was obtained by Lemoine by crossing *S. vulgaris* with the variety of *S. affinis* with fragrant violet-colored flowers (var. *Giraldii*). The plants grow rapidly and are tall narrow shrubs. Like their Chinese parent they bloom early and the flowers are fragrant. Forms of this hybrid, *Berryer*, *Claude Bernard*, *Lamartine*, *Mirabeau*, *Pascale* and *Vauban* are in the Arboretum Collection.

A lover of Lilacs living in Manitoba has recently obtained a hybrid of *S. pubescens* and *S. villosa* which promises to be interesting, and there is still much work to be done in raising new hybrids between the species of western China.

Rhododendron (Azalea) obtusum var. **Kaempferi** is the only red-flowered Azalea which is hardy in this climate. It has been largely used in the Arboretum and is now flowering at least two weeks earlier than usual. Its flowers furnish the most surprising and spectacular display of the year. They are delicate, however, and when fully exposed to the sun lose their color; and this Azalea gives most satisfaction when it is planted in the shade of trees or on the northern border of a wood of conifers. It is planted in masses at the lower end of Azalea Path and in a large group under the shade of the Hemlocks on Hemlock Hill and on the northern edge of Hemlock Hill in a long narrow band between the Hemlocks and the Laurels. The tallest plants in the Arboretum are now more than ten feet high and rarely fail to flower profusely even when growing in complete shade. This is one of the best shrubs which has been introduced by the Arboretum.

Rhododendron (Azalea) Vaseyi from the southern Appalachian Mountains is flowering profusely this year. The pure pink flowers appear on the leafless branchlets and in delicacy and purity of color are not surpassed by the flowers of any other plant. It is only in comparatively recent years that this Azalea has been known to botanists or has found its way into gardens. It is perfectly hardy, the flower-buds are not injured by severe cold, and in time it will grow into a tall, usually rather narrow shrub. This beautiful Azalea has been planted on both sides of the Meadow Road, the largest group being at the northern end of the first pond.

Rhododendron (Azalea) luteum, a native of the Caucasus, has bloomed in the Arboretum several times and, although the buds are often injured, is in good condition this year. It is growing on the right hand side of Azalea Path below the plant of *Rhododendron (Azalea) reticulatum*. If the flower-buds of this Caucasian plant were hardier this would be one of the most delightful of all Azaleas as the flowers are charming in color and more fragrant than those of any other Azalea.